

Causes of the Reformation reading

Major points:

- “Causes” are often oversimplified.
- Immediate causes often get too much credit for spurring the event.
- Remote causes (those further in the past) must also be considered.
- Look at various factors
 - Immediate cause...
 - Background agitation?
 - Strong personalities?
 - New potent ideas?
 - Economic factors?
 - Active religious forces?
 - Impact of new technology?
 - Weakening or strengthening of institutions? (like monarchy or church)
 - Physical environment?

- Students use textbooks
- Historians must go to the source (primary sources)

Reformation

- Issue of unpopular authority figures
- Hus – precursor near Saxony
- Waldo, Wycliffe, Savanarola, Erasmus, Valla
- Strong personality and personal convictions of Luther
- Many in Europe of the same “Mood”
- Circumstances were “ready”
- Printing Press to print both Luther’s ideas and the Bible
- Rising Mid-Class tiring of flow of money to Rome
- Nobles and Kings have wealth to gain from loss of church

Reformation cont.

- HRE – Charles V – new – fear of being unpopular – occupied by encroachment by Turks
- Papacy scandals and struggle for church power
– Pope = Church therefore criticism of Pope = Criticism of Church
- Rise of Nation-States
 - Kings have more direct power over their populace
 - breaks up sense of unity in Europe – look to local leaders not Rome
- Vernacular (Dante / Shakespeare / Luther)